

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1956

S E C R E T HAVANA 1346

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LANE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, US, CU

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

REF: STATE 127459, HAVANA 1329

1. I WAS CALLED TO FIRST VICE MINISTER ANILLO'S OFFICE TONIGHT, MAY 19, AT 10:30P.M. TO BE SHOWN THE LATEST AP AND UP REPORTS COVERING TODAY'S PRESS BRIEFING AT THE DEPARTMENT. IN LIGHT OF THESE REPORTS, ANILLO SAID, HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT TO GIVE ME CERTAIN COMMENTS. THESE HE READ TO ME FROM AN INFORMAL PAPER, A COPY OF WHICH HE THEN GAVE ME. THERE FOLLOWS A FREE TRANSLATION OF HIS REMARKS:

2. BEGIN QUOTE. IF THIS IS ACCURATE (THE WIRE SERVICE REPORTS) IT IS SERIOUS. AS WAS EXPLAINED TO YOU CATEGORICALLY WE HAVE NOT HAD RELATIONS WITH THE KATANGANS SINCE THE WAR IN ANGOLA TERMINATED MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO, NOR SINCE THE WAR FINISHED HAVE WE TRAINED OR GIVEN ANY ARMAMENT (TO THE KATANGANS). WE HAVE NOT HAD THE SLIGHTEST PARTICIPATION EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY IN EITHER OF THE TWO KATANGAN ACTIONS IN SHABA. THE REASONS WHY WE DID NOT SEE THAT ACTIVITY WITH ANY SYMPATHY WERE ALSO EXPLAINED TO YOU. WE NEVER TELL LIES; IN THE HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTION THERE IS NOT ONE CASE

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WHERE OUR GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD A LIE TO ANYONE. IT IS TRULY IRRITATING THAT AFTER LEAKING THE NEWS ABOUT COMRADE FIDEL'S WORDS TO YOU THERE SHOULD NOW APPEAR A PUBLIC DECLARATION MAKING THESE IMPUTATIONS WHICH PRESENT THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA AS MAKING FALSE AFFIRMATIONS. WE CONSIDER THE DECLARATIONS OF RESTON ABSOLUTELY DISHONEST AND AN ACT OF BAD FAITH. WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY A CONSTRUCTIVE GESTURE ON OUR

PART SHOULD BE MET IN THIS WAY. THE GESTURE OF COMRADE FIDEL IN RECEIVING YOU AND GIVING EXPLANATIONS TO YOU RESPONDED TO THE GESTURE WHICH SOME IMPORTANT OFFICIALS OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAVE IN TURN MADE RECENTLY TO OFFICERS OF OUR INTERESTS SECTION IN WASHINGTON AND TO THE CONTENTS OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS. THERE IS NOTHING EXTRAORDINARY IN THAT; WE KNOW THAT OUR PRESIDENT ENJOYED HAVING THAT CONTACT WITH YOU, AND HE REGRETS THAT SOME OTHER PERSONS HAVE BEHAVED INCORRECTLY, VIOLATING THE DISCRETION ACCORDED. OUR PRESIDENT KNOWS THAT YOU HAVE NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT. HE RECOGNIZES THE PROMPT RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO HIS MESSAGE. GIVEN THE FACT OF THE DECLARATION OF THE SPOKESMAN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TODAY THERE REMAINS NO ALTERNATIE BUT TO DRAW THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY IN THE UNITED STATES PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PLACING OBSTACLES IN COMMUNICATION AND CREATING DIFFICULTIES. THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA HOPES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES WILL RECTIFY THE IMPUTATIONS OF ITS SPOKESMAN. END QUOTE.

3. WHEN I ASKED ANILLO WHETHER HE HAD ANY RESPONSE TO YOUR SUGGESTION OF A CONFIDENTIAL MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ IN NEW YORK NEXT WEEK HE REFERRED ME BACK TO THE ABOVE STATEMENT. THUS IT APPEARS THAT UNLESS THERE IS SOME PUBLIC "RECTIFICATION" OF THE SPOKESMAN'S REMAKRS, RODRIGUEZ WILL NOT BE DISPOSED TO MEET WITH YOU DURING THE SSOD.

4. COMMENT: WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY BUGGING THE CUBANS IS THE RENEWED
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ALLEGATION BY THE SPOKESMAN DESPITE CASTRO'S DENIAL TO ME THAT THEY HAVE CONTINUED TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THE KATANGAN REBELS AND IN FACT TRAINED THEM FOR THE CURRENT INVASION OF SHABA. ANILLO COMMENTED THAT THE SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS HAD OFFSET THE POSITIVE IMPRESSION MADE BY YOUR PROMPT MESSAGE TO MALMIERCA, WHICH HE TERMED "CONSTRUCTIVE." I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING FURTHER CAN BE GAINED BY PUSHING HERE FOR THE MEETING WITH RODRIGUEZ, ALTHOUGH I BELIEVE THAT SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE VERY DESIRABLE TO DISCUSS NOT ONLY THE SHABA INCIDENT BUT ALSO THE WHOLE RANGE OF PROBLEMS IN U.S.-CUBAN RELATIONS. I THEREFORE RECOMMENT THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A MEETING BE RAISED AGAIN THROUGH THE CUBAN MISSION IN NEW YORK AFTER RODRIGUEZ ARRIVES NEXT WEEK.
LANE

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